



Hamilton-Wenham Regional Department of Public Facilities and Infrastructure (HWRDPFI)

Town of Hamilton  
Town of Wenham  
Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District

Community Innovation Challenge (CIC) Grant Program  
Fiscal Year 2013 Final Project Report  
Submitted April 1, 2014

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## **INTRODUCTORY LETTER**

April 1, 2014

Secretary Glen Shor  
Executive Office for Administration and Finance  
Massachusetts State House, Room 373  
Boston, MA 02133

Secretary Shor:

Attached, please find the final report for the Town of Wenham's Fiscal Year 2013 CIC project. Working with the Town of Hamilton and the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District, Wenham is proud to submit this report that details collective efforts, along with the support of the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management at the University of Massachusetts Boston, to plan the development of a regional department of public facilities and infrastructure.

The Towns of Hamilton and Wenham have a rich history of sharing precious municipal resources in an efficient and effective manner. In a unique fashion, the Towns of Hamilton and Wenham and the Hamilton - Wenham Regional School District endeavored to build upon this high level of success by creating the first in the Commonwealth combined public works department encompassing two towns and the regional school district. The School District and the Towns are committed to moving forward to design and implement a new paradigm for the management of all public facilities, infrastructure, and grounds maintenance, including routine and preventative building maintenance, capital repairs and overall infrastructure improvements.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the high level of professionalism exhibited by Mr. Tim Dodd and his staff and their extraordinary support throughout this program. Simply, their efforts provided the opportunity for the solid results of this grant program in FY 2013 and extraordinary dividends earned for the residents of the Towns of Hamilton and Wenham and our Hamilton — Wenham Regional School District.

Sincerely,

Mark Andrews  
Wenham Town Administrator

C:               Wenham Board of Selectmen  
CC:             Tim Dodd, CIC Program Manager

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A \$30,000 Community Innovation Challenge Grant provided the foundation for the establishment of a Hamilton -Wenham Regional Department of Public Facilities and Infrastructure (HWRDPFI). This was achieved with the assistance from the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management at the University of Massachusetts Boston and members of the Steering Committee representing Hamilton, Wenham, and the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD).

The project team from the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management at the University of Massachusetts Boston and members of the Steering Committee representing Hamilton, Wenham, and the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD) have worked together over the past few months to document the existing responsibilities of each of the public works and facilities departments and resources available to them. The results of this effort can be found in the Descriptive Profile of Operations.

Building upon the Descriptive Profile, the group then sought to identify what resources would be needed to successfully operate a combined department. This analysis takes into account the full extent of roads, facilities, parks, trees, cemeteries, etc. that must be managed and maintained as part of the public works functions for the two towns and the school district. The group then developed a series of different mergers.

## **PARTNER COMMUNITIES**

The Town of Wenham served as the project lead, and Mark Andrews, Town Administrator, coordinated the work of the project. In this role, Wenham oversaw the development and management of the contract with the Collins Center; Coordination of the submission of grant documents; Financial oversight; and Receipt of grant disbursements. Mark Andrews worked with Michael Lombardo, Town Manager of the Town of Hamilton, and Mike Harvey, Superintendent Schools for the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD), to ensure the success of the project..

## **GOALS**

The goals and objectives of the HWRDPFI are as follows:

1. The most important step in this process is getting the organizational, legal, institutional and operational framework right. Combining three very distinct entities is a complicated and intricate process. In order to assure we have the right level and expertise of personnel and have them in

the correct positions and hierarchy is as imperative at the organizational level as it is at the operational. The Collins Center Team was uniquely qualified to undertake this analysis and to make recommendations on the best methods to employ.

2. A complete analysis, roadmap, and implementation plan will be completed by the Collins Center for Public Management in the McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies at UMass Boston.
3. An Action Plan for Successful implementation.
4. Legal framework among the three entities.
5. Operational structure that maximizes the effectiveness and produces efficiencies of the new department.
6. Labor distribution structure and collective bargaining review.
7. Specialized technical assistance for long term success and sustainability.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

The implementation plan for this project included the following:

1. Enter into a contract with the Collins Center.
2. The project will include 200 hours of senior advisors and staff.
3. Convene a stakeholders working group or Steering Committee to review overall goals and objectives.
4. Keep the Boards of Selectmen, School Committee, Town Manager, Town Administrator and Superintendent of Schools informed of progress made.
5. Provide regular meeting schedule of the stakeholder working group.
6. File required reports with the Secretary of Administration and Finance.
7. Make final recommendations in the form of a Final Report to the Towns of Wenham and Hamilton and the Hamilton – Wenham Regional School Committee. Please see below:
  - **Organizational Assessment:** the purpose of the Organizational Assessment is to: a) Quantify the resources needed to establish a new regional public works department;
    - b) Assess whether those resources are available or could be made available;
    - c) Prepare a recommendation of those functions that could be merged; and,
    - d) Make recommendations on an organizational structure and governance framework;
  - **Descriptive Profile:** the Descriptive Profile provides an overview of the responsibilities of and resources available to the three departments considered for consolidation;
  - **Legal Framework:** the Legal Framework outlines the history of shared services between the towns of Hamilton and Wenham, describes the legal context within which inter-municipal agreements are prepared in Massachusetts, and offers considerations for any

agreement related to consolidated public works services;

- **Review of Bargaining Agreements:** in the Review of Bargaining Agreements, key provisions of the agreements in effect in Hamilton and Wenham are outlined and differences identified; and,
- **Action Plan:** the Action Plan provides a framework for action moving forward.

In essence, these five reports constitute the implementation plan (please see the Collins Center report).

## **BUDGET**

The budget for the HWRDPFI grant is \$30,000. The budgetary methodology centered around the contract with the University of Massachusetts Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management. The estimate was calculated at 200 hours of senior advisors and staff. A total of \$30,000 was incurred and paid to the Center.

## **CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS**

Implementation of the HWRDFI is an exciting project on which the two towns and regional school district have thought about for over three years. The Hamilton Wenham Capital Management Committee (CMC) is an advisory council that is charged with identifying, researching, and drafting recommendations on all areas of capital management for the Towns and Schools. In 2010, the CMC began to look at the prospect of merging public work resources to manage the combined entities in a more efficient and cost effective manner. While the benefits of combining grounds maintenance and buildings work for the three entities were relatively obvious; the CMC also envisioned combining all aspects of Public Works to include highway, sidewalks, water works, and drainage matters. The Collins report is the linchpin to successfully establishing this new organization and refining the relationships and lines of command that are needed. The objective is to have one lead entity management jurisdiction over all public buildings, grounds and infrastructure of the towns and the regional school district. The HWRDPFI will be governed and directed by a Board of Overseers that includes the Town Manager of Hamilton, the Town Administrator of Wenham and the Superintendent of Schools of the Hamilton — Wenham Regional School District. A new Director under the broad guidance of the Board of Overseers, and will be responsible for all aspects of public works services and functions for the Towns and Schools. This includes all current and future building maintenance, capital repairs and infrastructure improvements, grounds maintenance, and all other primary and ancillary public works functions and services. This new department would be designed to ensure that sustained

vigilance over the capital assets of our communities, through timely and effective maintenance and improvement, will result in additional financial, operational, and human resources' efficiencies in the future.

## **OUTCOMES**

The Collins Center project team worked with a Steering Committee representing the towns of Hamilton and Wenham, and the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District. The Committee met seven times between August 2013 and February 2014. As a group, they discussed the findings of the reports prepared by the Center and spent considerable time considering the optimal structure of and resources needed by a consolidated public works department. In recognition of the complexity of the subject matter, the Committee agreed that considerable public outreach would be needed and, on behalf of the Committee, the Town of Wenham applied for a second round of grant funds that would allow for the broad distribution of the findings of this report and for extensive discussion among community members, elected officials, and staff of the respective towns and school district., along with hardware and software to help implement the report. It is expected that this outreach and dialog will further enhance the work completed to date.

The purpose of the new municipal organization would be to provide consolidated management and governance of the above-listed functions in a manner that is fiscally responsible and accountable to its three customers. The organization would be led by a 3-member governing body consisting of the Town Manager of Hamilton, Town Administrator of Wenham, and the School Superintendent. The project team further recommends that on several occasions during the course of each year the board hold expanded meetings that would include the participation of additional officials from the towns and school district.

In recognition that the process of establishing a new organization will take some time, the project team has defined an interim alternative that would consolidate the facilities maintenance functions in one of the towns and all other functions in the other town. This would allow all parties to begin to benefit from partial consolidation in the short term, while also serving as a foundation for future consolidation. One important finding made in the organizational assessment is the severe understaffing of the facilities maintenance functions in the towns and school district. In fact, where 11 full time equivalents (FTE) are needed based upon the collective building square footage, only have 4.3 FTE collectively can be found across all three organizations today. To address this, and to set the consolidated organization up for success as opposed to failure, the project team is recommending the near term addition of four FTEs for facilities maintenance, including one foreman and three trades workers. When taking into account savings that can occur as a result of consolidation, the increased costs of these positions are estimated at approximately \$121,000 in the full consolidation alternative and approximately \$191,000 in the two departments, interim model.

As the positions are filled and employees trained, the towns and district can consider whether additional positions should be added. Although this represents a short term increase in

operating costs, by performing adequate facilities maintenance the towns and districts can help avoid significant capital costs that can be generated by deferred maintenance, costs vividly exemplified by the over \$5 million in school facilities repairs that have been needed in recent years.

The Towns of Hamilton and Wenham have updated Inter-municipal agreements (IMA) for Capital and Building Improvements for the three entities along with a Buildings and Grounds Inter-municipal agreements. Currently, the structure of these IMA's allows for the Regional Infrastructure Department to take shape while the framework of a comprehensive IMA is developed and thoroughly vetted (Please see Appendix I. II. & III.).

### **Contact Information**

Mark J. Andrews  
Town Administrator  
[mandrews@wenhamma.gov](mailto:mandrews@wenhamma.gov)  
978-468-5520 ex. 2

Deb Morong  
Administrative Assistant  
[dmorong@wenhamma.gov](mailto:dmorong@wenhamma.gov)  
978-468-5520 ex. 2

### **References**

[Town of Wenham Website](#)

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